Girl Talk by Bonejaw

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Summary:

A few years after their run in with the Mind Flayer, El just wants to keep kissing Mike, and she doesn't understand why he keeps stopping her. If she wants answers, she'll have to turn to the other women in her life.

1. Words We Won't Say

Author's Note:

> Wow, ok, here we are with my first ever fic. I had this idea today and it just flowered into this whole outline right in front of me. Please let me know if you like it, or even if you don't.
>
> Please take note that I'm trying to be deliberately vague about everybody's ages and what they're currently up to in life because I don't think it matters too much to the story. Just assume they're not underage and it all works out.

“We need to stop,” said Mike again, gasping for breath as he tore his mouth away from hers.

“Again? Why?” asked Eleven with a slight pout on her lips and a whine in her voice.

Mike always did this, and she thought it was stupid. They would start kissing, then his hands would start to run over her neck, her arms, her waist, her thighs, and then right as she felt ready for… for… well she didn't know what, but right as she felt ready for *something*, he would tear himself away with those same words every time.

“El, I can't… I…” he tried to explain, clearly distracted by her hands, which were still exploring under his shirt. With an exasperated look he snatched her wrists and forced them out into the open before taking a deep breath.

“El, look. There are… some things you don't know.”

She nodded solemnly. If there was anything she really knew, she knew that she didn't know much. She was reminded every day by some movie or game or TV show that she was still something of an outsider to the world away from the lab. She had actually become somewhat thankful for her ignorance in the few years since the Mind Flayer because it gave her an excuse to ask Mike questions.

She adored watching Mike answer her questions. His face would light up, and he would start gesticulating with one hand while the other held hers. Recently she'd found herself missing his explanations because she was busy watching him, but she knew he didn't mind explaining things to her two or three times.

“Teach me,” she ordered simply, staring at him with darkened eyes as she went to wrap her arms around his neck.

He once again grabbed her wrists, staring at her slack-jawed, leaning in for a second before shaking his head and looking away.

“Oh my god…” he muttered, staring at the wall for a second before turning back to her upturned, questioning face.

“I just… I don't…” Mike sighed then, releasing one of her wrists to run a hand through his hair. That was unfair, she thought. *She* wanted *her* hands in his hair, and didn't he know that doing that made her want to kiss him even more?

“I don't think I should be the one to explain this to you, El. I think you should ask someone else.”

El was shocked. In the years she had known Mike, this was the first time he had refused to answer one of her questions. Sure, his answers hadn't always been the best, like when she'd bled from between her legs and he'd started rambling about the cycles of the moon, but he'd always at least tried. Never before had he told her outright to look somewhere else for the answers she needed before making an attempt himself.

Her lip began to tremble as her eyes became watery. Had she asked too many questions? Was Mike finally getting tired of answering them?

“W-Why?” she asked again, this time with the beginnings of a sob threatening to choke out her words.

“Oh, no, El, don't cry,” he said softly. He took her into his arms, resting her head against his chest. “It's not that I don't want to answer your question, or that I don’t want to kiss you more,” he continued.

Mike was so good to her like that, always understanding so quickly what had upset her. “It… It wouldn't be right for me to explain this to you. You should learn from someone else, because I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to explain it right. And if I mess up teaching you this, I'll… well, I don't know what I'll do, but I know I'll feel like shit about it.”

At this, she turned her head up to look at his face, seeing the worry in his eyes and that small smile on his lips that she knows is for her, to cheer her up. She had become used to seeing it in the fall, when she started to remember all the things that happened to her, to them. Still, she was thrilled to see it once again, like a secret that only she got to know.

She hardly understood Mike's explanation, but she knew now that his refusing to answer didn't mean he liked her any less.

“Who do I ask?” she questioned slowly, determined to find an answer and to kiss Mike more. Hopefully without annoying, unnecessary interruptions in the future.

Mike blushed, which she’d always thought was cute. At first, she'd had trouble figuring out exactly what made him go red in the face, but over the years she had come to think of it as another one of her powers. Sure, his friends could make him blush sometimes, but usually they did it by talking about her. So now she could move things with her mind, find and observe people miles away, and make Mike blush. The last one was her favorite.

“I-I… I don't know,” he said, once again turning to stare into space.

She thought carefully. She knew one other person who she really liked to have answer her questions. Maybe she could ask him.

“Hopper?” she asked.

“NO!” shouted Mike, whipping his head back down to look at her face snuggled against his narrow chest. The sudden movement startled her, causing her to jerk in his arms.

“Sorry, El. No, not Hopper. It would probably be best to ask another

girl. Maybe Max?" he said, his brow furrowed in thought.

El pursed her lips. It wasn't that she didn't like Max. Ever since she'd found out that Max liked Lucas instead of Mike, she and the redhead had gotten along well enough. They weren't particularly close though, and Max had seemed annoyed before by El's incessant questions.

"Maybe… Joyce?" she proposed. Mike's face lit up and he grinned down at her before giving her a quick peck on top of her head.

"Yes!" he almost shouted, and she was elated. Mike was happy with *her* answer to *his* question and she thought she maybe understood a little better now why he seemed so happy when she asked him about things. "Yes, El, Ms. Byers would be perfect. Just make sure you ask her sometime when she's alone. For most people, the question you're asking might be a little embarrassing to talk about in public."

El nodded her assent, mind whirling as she planned how she would get the older woman alone.

"And if for some reason you can't ask Ms. Byers, Nancy should be coming back on vacation in about a week," continued Mike with a grimace. "It wouldn't be ideal, but I'm sure she'd give you a good answer."

"Not ideal?" she asked, tilting her head inquisitively.

"For me," he clarified. "If you ask Nancy about this, I'm sure I'll never hear the end of it. Still, she'd probably be better than Max, and I just want you to get a good answer."

Mike said this so earnestly that her heart swelled. She still didn't understand what they were talking about at all, but she knew Mike was willing to be teased as long as she got an answer.

Her mind was set. All she wanted was to keep kissing Mike, and now she knew how to do it. All she had to do was ask someone a question. Eleven was very, very good at asking questions.

2. Stealing Second

Summary for the Chapter:

> Max Mayfield unknowingly intercedes on Mike Wheeler's behalf.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Okay wow this took a while. I wrote like the first 900 words of this right after I finished chapter 1, but I had no idea how to end it.
>
> Apparently the trick was to get tipsy again and say screw it.
>
> So here it goes, I think this is gonna be the hardest chapter out of the whole thing since I have no idea what to do with Max. Enjoy. And hopefully chapter 3 comes faster.

With Max, she didn't have to ask a question at all. As a matter of fact, it was Max who asked her.

“So what base have you and Wheeler got to?”

Of course, El had no idea what she was talking about at first. Max had rolled her eyes and launched into an explanation of baseball that El found quite confusing. There were sticks? And definitely bases, which had numbers. And a plate, which was apparently everybody's home? Who lives on a plate?

But then Max had explained that she wasn't *really* talking about baseball at all, and El started to get *really* confused. She was talking about kissing and other things apparently.

El was astonished to learn there were other things.

“More than kissing?” she gasped, hugging herself around the shoulders and going as red as Max’s hair.

It was Wednesday afternoon, which meant the boys had their AV club meeting. It was really just an hour of the four of them playing with whatever new toy they had picked up for the clubroom on the school's budget. Usually, El would find herself dragged to the steps of the school after the final class she shared with Max while the redhead avoided the so-called “boy smell” until they were done. Personally, El liked the way Mike smelled at least, though she could pass on the other boys. Still, she usually let Max kidnap her because Max liked to talk about different things from the rest of the boys.

Eleven wasn't ready for this though.

Max rolled her eyes and turned away, hand shooting up to cover her mouth. “Wheeler hasn't explained *anything?*” she asked incredulously as she turned back to El, clearly trying to hide a smile.

“He said he shouldn't,” El enunciated slowly. “He said I should learn from someone else.”

At this, Max's grin softened into a small smile, her hand sinking back into her lap. “Of course he did. Wheeler would do something like that.”

And so Max launched into a step-by-step explanation of her baseball analogy. As far as El could tell, she and Mike had yet to move past first base. Second and third just seemed to involve touching each other in various places.

She'd already noticed Mike's hesitance to touch her anywhere under her shirt during the other times they'd kissed. And his weird insistence on pants. She thought pants were kind of uncomfortable, and sometimes didn't want to wear them. Whenever she suggested as much to Mike though, he would turn red and instantly forbid such a thing, looking away

“What's so special under my shirt? Or in my pants? It's all just me,” El asked, confused.

Max guffawed, unable to contain her amusement any longer. El could tell the other girl was trying to help, but Max simply couldn't help but laugh at El's simple questions. Yet another reason El liked Mike

so much: he never laughed at her questions. He answered every single one earnestly and honestly, understanding that this small group of people who knew El's secret were her window into normalcy, her access to the world she had stumbled out of the lab to find. He took his job as her teacher very seriously.

“Wait, El,” said Max, short of breath as her laughter finally slowed. “Hasn't *anyone* told you anything?”

“No,” replied El, frowning. She suddenly realized from Max's question that this wasn't just another thing between her and Mike. This was something *everyone* else knew about, another thing separating her from the rest of the world. Once again she felt that cold, creeping sense of shame that infected her when she realized she was different. Along with it came that constant fear of hers that she would never be normal, like everybody else.

“Oh, El,” Max sighed, shaking her head as her smile fell from her face. “Now I know why Wheeler didn't want to do this. I'm not really qualified to help you either.”

El was disappointed. When Max had started, the other girl had seemed enthusiastic enough to induct El into whatever knowledge it was that the brown-haired girl was missing. But if she wouldn't explain the whole thing, then maybe she'd explain part.

“But why?” she asked plaintively. “what is so special under clothes?”

Max blushed. El was surprised for a couple of reasons. First of all, she'd never seen Max blush before. Even when the other boys teased her and Lucas, she had always seemed unfazed, like she was unshakably comfortable with who she was and what she and Lucas had become. El had always been envious of that confidence. Second, the intensity of Max's blush was astonishing. El was sure she'd never seen it before because she would certainly remember if Max’s face had been the same color as her hair before.

“Alright, I… I guess…” Max continued, blush intensifying. “Did you… Have you ever… you know… touched yourself?”

El immediately looked at Max with the most condescending look she

could muster. *Of course* she had touched herself. She had hands didn't she? And, from a certain perspective, wasn't she always touching herself?

"Noooo," Max giggled as she took in El's expression, warming up to the subject at hand. "I mean touched yourself *down there.*"

El stared blankly at Max, not even pretending to understand her newest euphemism. Then, as Max awkwardly gestured between her own legs, Eleven suddenly understood.

"Oh!" said El loudly, joining Max in her blush. She quickly glanced around, even though no one had been near for their whole conversation, and asked the redhead in an astonished whisper, "You can do that?"

Max gave an exasperated sigh even as a sly smile crept up her face. As uncomfortable as she'd expected it to be, she found it quite easy to explain to El the mechanics of various acts. Of course, the curly-haired telekinetic hadn't even known that boys had different parts. Max mused that perhaps it was the other girl's rapt attention making it so natural as she launched into a detailed explanation of third base and what exactly that entailed. El's wide eyes and unblinking stare somehow made it simple to explain things that would have been embarrassing to even talk about with anyone else.

Of course, the boys had to finish their meeting and emerge from the school doors just as Max was delving into the various techniques involved in reaching home plate, interrupting her right as she reached the most important material.

Still, as they all went their separate ways at the end of the day, Max couldn't help but feel like she had finally grown closer to El, sharing something with her that the boys would never have.

It was only hours later, laying in her bed with the lights out, that Max would realize that she had never quite touched on the subject of protection. She spent only a few seconds worrying before realizing it wasn't so much her problems as Mike's.

'And if Mike can't figure it out, he's not as smart as I thought,' she

thought to herself as she drifted off to sleep with a vindictive smile.

Author's Note:

> Ok I'm gonna be real: I think I'm only posting this because I'm a little drunk right now. I mean, 1) this is my first fanfic ever and 2) I am a dude and I know next to nothing about what I'm supposed to be writing about here. The only way to make sure I post the rest of this fic is with feedback, so please throw me some comments (even if you just want to tell me you hated it).
>
> Ciao